

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



June 19, 2000

ALL-COUNTY LETTER NO. 00-40

REASON FOR THIS TRANSMITTAL

- ☐ State Law Change
- ☒ Federal Law or Regulation Change
- ☐ Court Order
- ☐ Clarification Requested by One or More Counties
- ☐ Initiated by CDSS

TO: ALL COUNTY WELFARE DIRECTORS
VOLUNTARY AGENCIES
MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATIONS
STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL
FORUM CHAIR
COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

SUBJECT: REFUGEE CASH ASSISTANCE (RCA) REGULATIONS

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Federal Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) regulations have been released in their final form. The regulations (65 Federal Register (FR) 15410) were published in the FR, Vol. 65, No. 56, March 22, 2000 and became effective April 21, 2000.

The new regulations provide states with options in designing an RCA program for those refugees not eligible for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income. The options are as follows:

- States may establish a public/private RCA program with local resettlement agencies;
- States may operate a publicly-administered RCA program modeled after a State's TANF program;
- States may establish an alternative program under the Wilson/Fish program; or
- States may obtain a waiver to continue to operate an Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)-type RCA program.

In accordance with the provisions of state law, California will proceed with a publicly administered RCA program modeled after the California Work Opportunities and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program (California's TANF Program).

Modeling RCA after CalWORKs allows for a relatively smooth transition since counties are already operating CalWORKs programs. Currently, the Counties operate their RCA programs based on the former AFDC program's income eligibility rules with the exception of aid payment levels and need standards. The aid payment levels and need standards follow the CalWORKs program in accordance with a waiver obtained by our Department in September 1998 which was granted by the Federal Office of Refugee Resettlement.

In addition to providing the States with options in designing an RCA program, the regulations also amend certain provisions governing the RCA and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) programs. Our office will be amending the current RCA regulations in Division 69, Chapter 69-200 (Refugee Resettlement Program) and 69-300 (Cuban/Haitian Entrant Program) to reflect the changes in the new federal rules for the publicly-administered RCA program. The State Department of Health Services will be amending the regulations for the RMA program.

The following provisions are applicable to the current RCA program effective May 1, 2000:

- In determining income eligibility, counties must use the \$225 and 50% disregards used in the CalWORKs program (see Section 44-111.23 of the Eligibility and Assistance standards manual CalWORKs); and
- Any reception and placement cash received by a refugee may not be considered in determining income eligibility (45 CFR Section 400.66 (d)). (Voluntary resettlement agencies will still need to be contacted to inquire whether the refugee has refused an offer of employment or has voluntarily quit a job).

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Betts Smith, Analyst, Refugee Programs Branch, Policy Bureau, at (916) 654-0495.

Sincerely,

***Original Document Signed By
Bruce Wagstaff On 6/19/00***

BRUCE WAGSTAFF
Deputy Director
Welfare to Work Division